



*Slán Beannacht
Margaret*

In Irish, the use the word 'slán' is used when saying goodbye. It means be safe, take care, and often is used in the fuller form 'slán beannacht' which means go well with a blessing.

Today, as we farewell Margaret in these pandemic days, it is even more pertinent that we use this word 'slán' and wish her safety on her journey home and offer her a blessing. We also acknowledge that "taking care" is a theme that has been characteristic of Margaret during her years here.



Catherine established this House as a safe place for women and children to come - at a time in Ireland's history when that was important. Like Catherine, Margaret has ensured that the House provided a warm welcome to those who have come to stay over the time she has been here.

- Margaret, for the care you have shown to those who have come to stay, we say thank you.



Catherine wrote to Mary Vincent Harnett (8 Nov 1840)

"I received your welcome letter and was quite amused with all your projected arrangements for the proposed visitors. Man proposeth, etc. We have a continuation of melancholy news from London - a second Sister dead and a third in a very doubtful state..."

Margaret has developed the health and safety plan for Mercy International Centre, and one obvious example is that with Avril in these recent times there are screens, hand sanitisers etc for the safety of staff and visitors.

- Margaret, for the care you have shown in protecting those who visit the House, we say thank you.



Catherine on her deathbed said, "Be sure to have a good cup of tea" Margaret has served numerous cups of tea, not just to guests but also to many in need who have come to the door.

- Margaret, for the care you have shown in serving others, we say thank you.

Like Catherine did at Coolock, Margaret has undertaken responsibility for the staff in the House during her time here, her care for them going beyond what was required.

- Margaret for the care you have shown to the Staff of Mercy International Association, we say thank you.



In all her tripping about, Margaret has visited many gardens throughout Ireland. She will also be remembered for the work she did in our garden - working with architects, builders, gardeners and money. Therefore ensuring that the Sacred Garden Project at Mercy International Centre came to fruition.

- Margaret for the care you have shown in the renovation of the Sacred Garden and of the burial place of Catherine and the early Sisters, we say thank you.



Catherine's niece wrote to her (30 April 1840) saying

*Dear Reverend Mother, our cook and your namesake
wants to compose a most beautiful teacake.*

*For materials of which 'twill be needful to pay
And therefore for cash your petitioners pray."*

Margaret has managed the financial dimension of MIA and has often been the recipient of our petitions for cash, and while we haven't always got what we want(!!!)... we know that *'since there is very little good that can be accomplished, or evil avoided, without the aid of money, we must look after it in small as well as in great matters'* (C McAuley 10 Jan 1838)

- Margaret, for the care you have shown in ensuring that Mercy International Association has a stable financial base, we say thank you.

And like Catherine, Margaret does have a sense of humour and has entertained us with many a story over the years as well as been a good companion to us all.

- Margaret, for your friendship and care, we say thank you.

Blessing Prayer

(Adapted from John O'Donoghue's writings)

*This House of Mercy is you home!
And yet, now you return to your other homeland.
Every time you leave home,
Another road takes you
Into a world you were never in.*

*New strangers on other paths await.
New places that have never seen you
will startle a little at your entry.
Old places that know you well
will pretend nothing
changed since your last visit.*

*As you travel home
may the nourishment of the earth be yours,
may the clarity of light be yours,
may the fluency of the ocean be yours,
may the protection of the ancestors be yours.*

*May you travel in an awakened way,
gathered wisely into your inner ground;
that you may not waste the invitations
which wait along the way to transform you.*

*May you travel safely, arrive refreshed,
and live your life to its fullest;
may you return home to Australia
more enriched and animated by Mercy
to balance the gift of days which call you.*

